MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

CONTENTS FOR FEBRUARY, 1909

The entire contents of this magazine are protected by copyright, and must not be reprinted without the publishers' permission

Frontispiece

Nature's Music 586
A poem by Clinton Scollard, with a drawing by J. H. Gardner-Soper, printed in colors

Special Articles

The New Florida . . . . . Herbert N. Casson 587
With sixteen illustrations
The So-Called "Tidal Waves" Which Follow Great Earthquakes . T. J. J. See 610
Mrs. Abraham Lincoln and Her Friends . . . . . Willis Steell 617
With eight portraits
Hazing—Its Ancient Origin and Modern Development . Harry Thurston Peck 624
Maurice Maeterlinck and His Home at St. Wandrille . . Alvan F. Sanborn 628
With six illustrations
The Younger Children of the German Kaiser . . . Theodore Schwarz 649
With two illustrations
Famous Affinities of History . . . . . Lyndon Orr 660
II—George Eliot and George Henry Lewes. With two portraits
Marcella Sembrich—The Close of a Great Operatic Career Lawrence Reamer 677
With two portraits

Serial Stories

The White Sister (Chapters VII-X) . . . . . F. Marion Crawford 635
Desmond O'Connor—A Romance of the Irish Brigade (Chapters XXV-XXVIII)
George H. Jessop 728

Short Stories

The Carpet-Man . . . . . Louise Kennedy Mabie 605
For the Sake of Argument . . . . . Theodore Roberts 614
La Tambourine . . . . . C. Bryson Taylor 652
With a drawing by E. M. Ashe
The Subduing of Mrs. Charlemagne Bangs . . . Anna McClure Sholl 667
Illustrated by Horace Taylor
The Kidnaping of Steinberg's Baby . . . . . Will Gage Carey 683
A Man's Honor . . . . . Clarence Herbert New 685
The Madonna of Renunciation . . . . . Cameron Nelles Wilson 687
An Incident of the Banks . . . . . Burke Jenkins 690
The Loss of Harris . . . . . William S. Hornor 691
King Sullivan . . . . . George Allan England 712
The Valuable Christopher . . . . . Joseph C. Lincoln 718
With a drawing by George Wright

Departments and Miscellaneous

Storiettes 683
Light Verse 693
The Stage 697
With eight portraits of prominent players

Poems By Clinton Scollard, Blakeney Gray, Stanton West, John Kendrick Bangs, Vivian M. Moses, Peter McArthur, John M. Woods, Sennett Stephens, Julian Durand, Theodosia Garrison, T. L. Masson, Harold Susman, Cora A. Matson Dolson, Channing Pollock, Herman Marcus, Percy M. Cushing, Clarence Urmy, Carlyle Smith, Wilberforce Jenkins, Frank Dempster Sherman, Archibald Crombie, Charles Hanson Towne, Anne O'Hagan, Cyril Evers, Willard Huntington Wright.

ISSUED MONTHLY BY THE FRANK A. MUNSEY COMPANY,
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, and Temple House, Temple Avenue, E. C., London
FRANK A. MUNSEY, President. RICHARD H. TITHERINGTON, Secretary. CHRISTOPHER H. POPE, Treasurer.
COPYRIGHT, 1909, BY THE FRANK A. MUNSEY COMPANY

ENTERED AT THE NEW YORK POST-OFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MAIL MATTER

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016

https://archive.org/details/mrsabrahamlincol00stee

MRS. ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND HER FRIENDS

BY WILLIS STEELL

WHEN Mrs. Lincoln went to Washington to become mistress of the White House, she was not a stranger in the capital. Ten years before, she had lived there inconspicuously as the wife of an obscure Representative from a remote Western State, as Illinois then was; and that taste of the excitement, intrigues, extravagance, and dangers of Washington life, although it lasted for only a single term of her husband's service as Congressman, proved delightful enough to unsettle and unfit her for a narrow existence. She afterward saw Springfield with the critical eye of a worldling, and her dream was of a return to the nation's capital, clothed with power to reward magnanimously the few who had given her social recognition, and to repay in kind the neglect of others. The horizon of her social observation had widened immensely, and her ambition soared to no less extensive bounds.

There is no testimony to show that she realized the signs of the times, or measured the significance of events otherwise than by the meager standard of her personal wishes and ambitions. She assumed her lofty place unperturbed and unconcerned. There had been an exciting and rancor-breeding campaign, it is true; but other campaigns as rancorous and eventful had passed with no untoward happening; nor could she see that in the Presidency of her husband there would be more than the usual activity of politics. That a cloud of war hung black over the nation she had no discernment to perceive. Had she seen that this shadow would never leave her, although the storm might break at last and pass away, she would have crossed the threshold of the White House with trembling limbs. As it was, she entered there proudly, as one who had labored zealously and who deserved the prize when it fell into her eager hands.

During her early years in Washington, Mrs. Lincoln had been painfully conscious of her inexperience, and had sought knowledge of the world with a thirsty soul. It was not pleasant to return to the narrow round of life in Springfield; but what she could not gain there from people she sought in books. Never doubting that she would one day return to the capital in a position of greater influence, she prepared herself to sustain it with the materials that lay near by.

From her great husband she could learn little—a child he was, and a child he would remain, in superficial social wisdom; but from his political colleagues, from the statesmen and lawyers who occasionally sat at her dinner-table, she thought she could learn much. She spared them no questions which would add to her store of knowledge regarding the circles and the cliques of the capital; and as well as she could, in her unhappy exile, she prepared to conquer them. Her mind was remarkably receptive; and the results of the catechism to which she subjected her Eastern guests satisfied her that a strong personality—or at least an unusual one—was required in any woman who should attempt to weld together the mixed and contradictory elements of Washington society. So far her deduction was correct, and she went no further. She did not realize that the elements of this society were already in course of disintegration.

At length the moment came when her ambition received its crown. She was the first lady in the land. Without nervous-

ness and without fear she prepared to enjoy her preeminence.

THE SOCIAL SUPREMACY OF THE SOUTH

In Washington, at that epoch and for many years previous to it, the women of the South had enacted the social laws. With their natural and acquired graces, with their inherited taste and ability in social affairs, it was natural that the reins should have fallen to them. They represented the aristocracy of the United States at the time; but they were kind-hearted aristocrats, for the most part, who smiled good-naturedly at the awkward and perplexed attempts of the women from the North and West—"Mrs. Senator This," "Mrs. Congressman That"—to thread the mazes of the social labyrinth. Like all aristocrats, however, they were chary of admitting such outsiders to their inner circle, and they chafed at the thought that one of these, by a turn of the political wheel, had been raised above them.

In this Southern set Mrs. Lincoln should have known that she could be welcomed only of necessity. She should have comprehended that their smiles were merely those of courtesy, that their sympathy was forced. Most of these women found it expedient to court the new mistress of the White House; but few of them really liked her, and from their covert unfriendliness arose the prejudice which spread over the entire country and followed the widow of the martyred President to her grave.

If the Southern women of the capital whispered behind their fans that Mrs. Lincoln was *gauche* and ordinary, the women of the North criticized her for what they termed her lack of seriousness, her volatile tendencies, her extravagance in dress; and they condemned her for her preference, very early shown, for the beautiful Southern maids and matrons. Between these two hostile camps Mrs. Lincoln set up her republican court. Her task of keeping them well affected toward her proved hardly less difficult than the vast and awe-inspiring work of her husband. Considering her temperament, and the slight experience which she brought to her task, it is strange that she attained even a measure of success.

Among the ladies of the Cabinet, Mrs. Lincoln found no help. With one or two exceptions, they were strangers to Washington, and their spirits were weighed down by the impending peril of the nation. Their duties of receiving and attending social functions were performed awkwardly and timidly. None of them was attracted to the President's wife, and she made her first mistake when she ignored them.

Casting about for intimates who could always be drawn upon when it was essential for a group of ladies, in the old-time phrase, to "grace the White House," Mrs. Lincoln selected as her informal ladies-in-waiting certain women whom she had heard praised for their brilliancy and courted for their beauty. Several of these were not politically attached to the administration; nearly all of them, if not Southern by birth, had strong Southern affiliations.

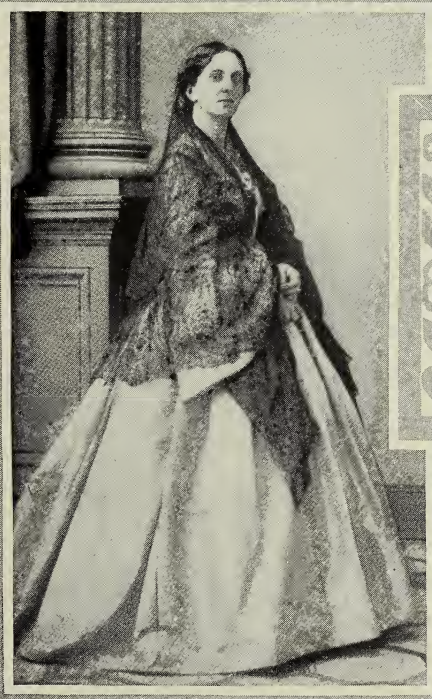
MRS. CRITTENDEN AND MRS. DOUGLAS

Prominent among them was Mrs. John J. Crittenden, a beautiful Kentucky woman, married to a man who had served several terms in the United States Senate, and who had been Governor of his State and Attorney-General under Presidents Harrison and Fillmore. Senator Crittenden was a prominent "war Democrat," and after the outbreak of hostilities he gave warm and eloquent support to the cause of the Union. His daughter, Mrs. Chapman Coleman, was a graceful and accomplished woman. Coming from a border State, the Crittenden family showed a striking instance of that division of sentiment which characterized the people of their section. One of Senator Crittenden's sons, Thomas L. Crittenden, volunteered for service in the Federal army, winning the rank of major-general at Shiloh. Another son, General George B. Crittenden, held an important command in the armies of the Confederacy, and more than once these brothers faced each other on the field of battle.

Another notable figure in this Southern circle was Myra Clark Gaines, the widow of a Virginian soldier, General Edmund P. Gaines. Mrs. Gaines was then prosecuting the historic series of lawsuits by which she sought to establish her title to the property that had belonged to her

MRS. STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS, SENATOR DOUGLAS'S SECOND WIFE (MISS ADÈLE CUTTS, OF WASHINGTON)

MRS. ABRAHAM LINCOLN
From a photograph taken in 1861, shortly after she became Mistress of the White House



MRS. JOHN E. ALLEN, ONE OF MRS. LINCOLN'S CLOSE PERSONAL FRIENDS, WHO LATER BECAME AN ACTRESS

MRS. GEORGE B. McCLELLAN, WHO WAS A DAUGHTER OF SECRETARY OF STATE MARCY, AND WHOSE SON IS NOW MAYOR OF NEW YORK

MYRA CLARK GAINES, FAMOUS AS THE CLAIMANT OF A VAST ESTATE IN NEW ORLEANS

MRS. ULYSSES S. GRANT—A WAR-TIME PORTRAIT OF THE WIFE OF GENERAL GRANT

MISS KATE CHASE, DAUGHTER OF CHIEF JUSTICE CHASE, AND A PROMINENT FIGURE IN THE WHITE HOUSE CIRCLE

ISABELLA HINCKLEY (MME. SUSINI), A CELEBRATED AMERICAN SINGER WHO WAS A FRIEND OF MRS. LINCOLN

father, Daniel Clark, of New Orleans. Most of this she later succeeded in recovering—though more to the advantage of her lawyers than of herself.

For a time, Mrs. Lincoln turned to the wife of Stephen A. Douglas, her husband's old rival, and begged her to lend her charming presence to the White House. Mrs. Douglas—who had been Miss Adèle Cutts, a Washington belle, before she became the Little Giant's second wife—was willing to grace Mrs. Lincoln's court, and for two or three months she was a prominent figure at the Presidential receptions. To the women of the Republican party this gave offense, without conciliating the opposition circles.

In this choice, as in every other, Mrs. Lincoln was moved by her impulses. These began to sway her with the changefulness of fever. She made "dear friends," and kept them for a week; then she ceased sending them cards to semi-public receptions. The impression became confirmed in Washington that Mrs. Lincoln was "erratic," when in reality she was simply puzzled.

While General McClellan commanded the Army of the Potomac, his wife, who had been Miss Ellen Marcy, a daughter of the famous Secretary of State under President Pierce, was a conspicuous figure at Mrs. Lincoln's receptions; as were Mrs. Maunsel B. Field, of New York, and also Mrs. John E. Allen, whose face, it is said, was made "for any part she was expected to play," and who did actually go upon the stage in after years.

These were a few of the women who "received" with Mrs. Lincoln at her request, and who were always welcomed at the White House during the early part of President Lincoln's first term of office. They were chosen as a matter of personal preference, and not as a matter of policy. Hence, very naturally, their intimacy with Mrs. Lincoln excited much jealousy among the Senators' wives and the ladies of the Cabinet.

THE CLOUD OF CIVIL WAR

Mrs. Lincoln's social position was peculiarly trying because of the gloom which hung over the nation by reason of the Civil War. It seemed almost heartless to give brilliant entertainments while hundreds of thousands of men were struggling in battle and suffering the rigors of cold and hunger at the front. Dance-music only recalled the groans of those who lay writhing in agony upon the cots of the military hospitals. Yet, if the mistress of the White House gave no entertainments, she was sure to be criticized, and the very fact might have intensified a feeling, both in this country and abroad, that the national cause was doomed. The most elaborate function given at the White House was held on the night of February 5, 1862, admission being only by invitation. Apropos of this, Mr. Lincoln remarked in his Western way:

"I don't fancy this pass business."

The President and his wife received in the East Room. Major Poore, in his volume of reminiscences, describes her costume as a white satin dress cut *décolleté,* and trimmed with black-lace flounces, which were looped up with knots of ribbon. She wore a rather remarkable head-dress of flowers. The other principal apartments of the White House—the Red, Green, and Blue Rooms—were thrown open, and were decorated with rare flowers, while music was provided by the Marine Band in the corridor. Mrs. Lincoln's eldest son, Robert Lincoln—whom some humorist of that day nicknamed "The Prince of Rails"—assisted in receiving. A really brilliant company was gathered, including the members of the diplomatic corps with their wives and daughters, Senators, justices of the Supreme Court, and Cabinet officers. From the army came Generals McClellan and Frémont, and the two French royal princes, the Comte de Paris and the Duc de Chartres, who were then nominally attached to McClellan's staff.

As a social entertainment, the affair was a success; yet it brought great censure upon both the President and Mrs. Lincoln. The details were much exaggerated. A rimester in Philadelphia wrote a scurrilous poem entitled "The Queen Must Dance." Others compared this reception to the ball given by the Duchess of Richmond at Brussels on the night before the battle of Waterloo. As a matter of fact, there was no dancing; and the criticism might perhaps have been less harsh had the fact been generally known that the President's two younger

children had been taken ill after the cards were issued, and that for two nights before the reception Mrs. Lincoln had watched with them, sleepless and anxious. Indeed, it was less than two weeks afterward that young Willie Lincoln died.

MRS. LINCOLN AND KATE CHASE

About this time, a young girl scarcely out of her teens won the honors from all her would-be rivals. This was Miss Kate Chase, daughter of the Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon P. Chase, afterward Chief Justice of the United States. Mrs. Lincoln, true to the instinct that prompted her to have beautiful and vivacious associates about her, quickly formed a friendship with this young girl, and advanced her to what might be called the post of "first lady-in-waiting." In this, however, she made no mistake, for Miss Chase had the diplomatic instinct fully developed. As soon as she felt assured of the strength of her position, she delicately began to direct the President's wife in a way likely to gain for her some of the social prestige for which Mrs. Lincoln longed. Miss Chase warned her of the mistake she was making in constantly choosing a few women on whom to bestow her favor, and advised her to vary her attendants with every succeeding function. For a short period Mrs. Lincoln followed this prudent counsel, with the result that during the next two years of her reign, despite the increasing troubles of the state, the White House functions were on the whole more successful than before.

There could hardly have been in Washington two natures more dissimilar than Mary Lincoln and Kate Chase, and their union was bound to be short-lived. While it endured, Mrs. Lincoln tasted some of the sweets of popularity so grateful to her palate. When it dissolved, her unpopularity grew apace.

Mrs. Lincoln's characteristics were quick excitability and restlessness; her manner was too animated, her laugh too frequent. Miss Chase talked fluently and gracefully, yet always with perfect calm. She was a born woman of the world, with an air of sincerity which added to her charm; and this charm was exercised on women as well as men. None of her portraits, beautiful as they were, did her entire justice. Her complexion was of a delicate fairness, her fine features seeming to be modeled from beautifully tinted bisque. Her eyes, bright, soft, and sweet, were of an exquisite blue, and her hair had the wonderful color of a corn-tassel in the sunlight. Her teeth were perfect, her figure was remarkably graceful, and the poets of that day—and, indeed, those of a much later day—sang the turn of her exquisite throat and the regal carriage of her head. To the day of her death, which was recent, despite cares and sorrows, this woman preserved much of her remarkable attractiveness.

From her teens, Miss Chase had been initiated into political knowledge, for which her calm and thoughtful nature well fitted her. She was ambitious for her father; and six months before the campaign of 1864, when she foresaw that neither party would nominate him for President, she turned her energy to the formation of plans and intrigues to obtain for him the nomination in 1868. His acceptance of the Chief Justiceship tendered by Lincoln disappointed her deeply.

In politics Mrs. Lincoln's influence might have been injurious had her husband ever permitted her to have her way. But he was not the man to yield his judgment, even though it was his wife who urged him; and when Kate Chase understood, as soon she did, that however great might be her ascendency over Mrs. Lincoln, she could not reach the President in this way, the young woman tired of the burden which she had voluntarily assumed, and no longer served as an assistant at the White House functions. Besides, her brilliant marriage with Governor William Sprague, of Rhode Island, which turned out so unhappily, was at this time being arranged.

BEFORE THE FINAL TRAGEDY

For a period of several months there was no "favorite" at the White House. A new election was impending, and the gaieties which Mrs. Lincoln insisted on arranging at fitful intervals were in truth political meetings, where the Southern women, less by one half than they had been, felt sadly out of place. Mrs. Fessenden, who had been Miss Ellen Deer-

ing, of Portland, Maine, made a delightful impression on such members of the "court" as remained constant; but her nature was averse to frivolity, and she appeared at the Presidential receptions only when urged by Mrs. Lincoln. Later, the President's wife was to find in this woman a strong spirit on which she could lean, but this was shortly before the tragedy that ended at one blow her reign and her earthly happiness.

During her four years in the White House, Mrs. Lincoln's love of the theater, always strong, rose to a passion. She began to cultivate the acquaintance of actresses and singers who visited Washington, and to honor them with invitations to the Executive Mansion. Among these were Laura Keene, Isabella Hinckley (Mme. Susini), Mrs. John Wood, and Mrs. John Hoey. With Miss Keene and Mrs. Hoey she remained on terms of intimacy for several years. Their visits to Washington were occasional only, and thus the friction so apt, unfortunately, to arise between Mrs. Lincoln and the women she saw every day, was avoided in their case.

Miss Keene, whose real name was Mary Moss, was an actress of great melodramatic talent, and she was destined to be associated with Mrs. Lincoln in a very painful way. Two years before Mr. Lincoln's inauguration, she had made a great success in the part of *Mary Trenchard* in Tom Taylor's famous comedy, "Our American Cousin"; and it was while the President and his wife were watching her in that same play, at Ford's Theater, on the fateful Good Friday of 1865, that Lincoln was shot down.

Before this awful and final tragedy, the life of Mrs. Lincoln had become utterly monotonous and wearisome. At first all had been delightful. She had conquered, as she thought, the haughty prejudices of the highest Washington society. She had half compelled it to accept the favorites she selected, and to make them its reigning belles. With the increasing knowledge of her husband's power to command respect and love, she felt more and more sure of her position. She no longer begged for the countenance of any clique or circle of women. Those whom she singled out were fortunate; those whom she refused to recognize remained outside the pale.

Yet, although it seemed to her that she had accomplished all she aimed at—to rule Washington, to "make" its society, and to give laws of dress to it, nevertheless, she felt dissatisfied. Her reign had yielded only Dead Sea fruit—with ashes to choke her throat. Weariness was her portion. The "court" she set up had turned into a mocking bubble, shining in iridescent colors only in her imagination; created from sordid materials, and wholly empty.

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY

A DAY of joy, a holiday;
  A day in festal colors dressed
To honor one who knew not play,
  Nor ever tasted rest!

Oh, man of sorrows and of tears,
  Would we could bring to you
Back through the pathway of the years
  One touch of comfort true!

Would that your eyes might penetrate
  The shadows in between,
Through all the clouds of war and hate,
  And mists that intervene,

Into the hearts of all the throng
  Of living men to find
Your name and fame the first among
  The treasures of mankind!

John Kendrick Bangs